



January 2013



Jodi Ross,
Town
Manager

jross@westfordma.gov
www.westfordma.gov/tm
978-692-5500

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WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV

Massachusetts

Municipal

Association

2013 Website

Award Winner



Watch Meetings Online

westford
CAT

www.westfordcat.org

Dear Westford Residents,

The tragic events that occurred in December at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut left our town employees deeply saddened and committed to doing what we can to ensure the safety of our residents. One of the selectmen's goals for 2013 is to improve the level of safety and security in our town and school facilities, and the Police Chief, School Superintendent, and I have already begun meeting to implement improvements. You may find the complete list of the 2013 Board of Selectmen/Town Manager Goals at the following link:

[2013 Goals.](#)

This past December our community was very generous with the Santa's workshop program. Our town and school employees, along with residents, businesses, clubs, and churches, were able to help 96 families with gifts and food this holiday season.

My sincere congratulations and best wishes for continued success to the following officers who were promoted this month in the Fire Department: Captain Mark Valcourt, Captain David O'Keefe, Lieutenant Shawn Girard, and Lieutenant Paul Lemieux. The Fire Department also recently received a S.A.F.E. grant for \$5,225 for educating students in fire safety.

Congratulations to the Upper Merrimack Valley Medical Reserve Corps for receiving a \$15,000 grant for pet preparedness, supplies, shelters and staffing during town-wide storms and emergencies.

I am pleased to report that Westford won the Massachusetts Municipal Association's Website Award for the most outstanding website in a town with a population between 15,000 and 49,999 residents.

I am proud to announce that the Police Department received the Southern New England Gold Award of 2012 and Police Traffic Officer Scott Hyder received the 2012 Traffic Safety Hero of the Year Award from AAA.



*Officer Scott Hyder; Diana Dias and Ken Crossley
from AAA; with Captain Joseph Roy*



*A thank you to
Captain Joseph Roy*

One of our longest serving town employees retired in December. Police Captain Joseph Roy retired after 36 years of serving the town of Westford residents as a member of our police department. Joe had an exceptional service record and set the bar very high while contributing to the successful and professional operation of our police department. Thank you to Joe for his years of service to our town.

Angus Jennings, our Director of Land Use Management for the past three years has resigned to become a planning consultant for a private firm. Angus was instrumental in the achievement of many town priorities over the past few years, and I thank him for his contributions and wish him well in his new endeavor.

Happy New Year to all!

Jodi Ross

Jodi Ross

Health Department News

What is the flu?

Seasonal flu ("the flu") is caused by a virus that infects your lungs, nose, and throat and makes you sick. Flu season starts in early winter, and continues through early spring every year. The flu comes on very quickly and makes you feel very sick. Most people will feel better within a week.

Symptoms include:

- Fever
- Tiredness/weakness
- Severe muscle and joint aches
- Dry cough
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Runny/stuffy nose

What is the common cold?

The common cold is caused by germs that affect your nose more than any other part of your body.

Symptoms include:

- Stuffy nose
- Sneezing
- Runny nose
- Sore throat
- Wet cough

WITH THE FLU:

You have a fever

Your entire body feels sick.

You feel very sick.

You can have the flu starting in early winter and continuing through early spring.

You can get a shot to protect yourself.

WITH A COLD:

You almost never have a fever.

You feel stuffiness in your head.

You feel a little sick.

You can have a cold any time of year.

There is no shot to protect you.

Lower your chances of getting & spreading the flu:

- Get a flu shot every year to prevent the flu!
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough into your inner elbow.
- Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Use a household cleaner to clean things that are touched often like:
 - Door and refrigerator handles
 - Computer keyboards/mouse
 - Phones
 - Kids' toys
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water, or use an alcohol based hand gel.
- Keep about 3 to 6 feet between yourself and other people.
- If you are sick, stay home. You can spread the flu even if you feel better.
 - Adults can spread the flu for about 5 days.
 - Kids can spread the flu for 7 days.
- If you are breastfeeding your baby and have the flu, you might want to wear a facemask so your baby doesn't get sick

For more information visit: www.mass.gov/flu

Health Department News (continued)

Emerson Hospital Donates Flu Vaccine to Health Department- Vaccination Appointments Required!

Emerson Hospital, in recognition of their service in the communities they serve, have generously donated 100 doses of flu shots to the Westford Health Department.

We currently have the following flu vaccine available:

- Regular Flu Shots: Licensed for people age 3 years and up.
- High Dose Fluzone: Licensed for adults age 65 and older

These vaccines will be available to residents on a first come-first served basis, while supplies last. An appointment is required and can be made by calling **978-692-5509**.

For more information about these flu vaccines and about the flu illness please go to the Westford Health Dept. website at www.westfordma.gov/boh

Build a Flu Care Kit filled with the supplies you'll need if you get sick

Keep the following supplies at home to use in case someone gets the flu. Get these supplies before you or someone you care for gets sick. It can be hard to find the time or energy to go to the store to buy what you need when someone is sick.

- A digital thermometer
- Non-aspirin medicines like:
 - Acetaminophen (Tylenol® or store brand)
 - Ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®, or store brands, etc.)
- Drinks – like water, fruit juice, soups, and sports drinks
- Soap and alcohol-based hand gel
- Food that is easy to digest (crackers, oatmeal, rice, etc.)
- Extra supply of food, medicine, or equipment for those with special needs
- Cleaning supplies – household disinfectant, paper towels, trash bags
- The name and phone number of the family doctor

Check the expiration dates on all your supplies every 6 months.

www.mass.gov/flu

Health Department News (continued)

ServSafe Food Safety Training Course

The Board of Health is happy to be once again offering a two-day ServSafe food safety training course on Wednesday March 27 and Wednesday April 3, 2013.

ServSafe is nationally accredited, recognized and often required by State and Federal Food Code(s) depending on the nature and menu of a particular food event in Massachusetts.

The course will be held on both nights from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at the Millennium School, 23 Depot Street in the All Purpose Meeting Room and will be made available for members and organizations of Westford's Community.



The cost to audit the lecture portion of the course is free for Westford residents, non-profits, members of local community organizations and food establishments; however the text books and answer exam sheets are \$70.00. Space is limited to the first 35 applicants and is open to only one applicant per organization. All book fees must be received by the Board of Health Office, located at Town Hall 55 Main Street, no later than February 28, 2013. Depending on space availability, The Board of Health Office may open the course to more than one applicant per organization. At the time of registration please provide your name, the company or organization you are associated with, address, day time & evening phone number along with a valid email address.

To obtain more information please call the Westford Board of Health office at 978-692-5509.



The Friends of the J. V. Fletcher Library present

WESTFORD *reads the* CIVIL WAR? 1863-2013

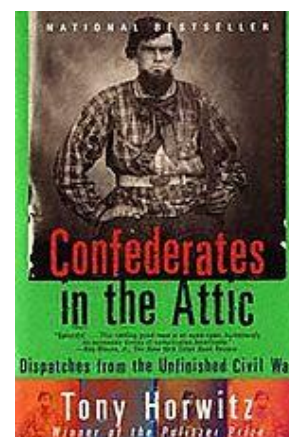
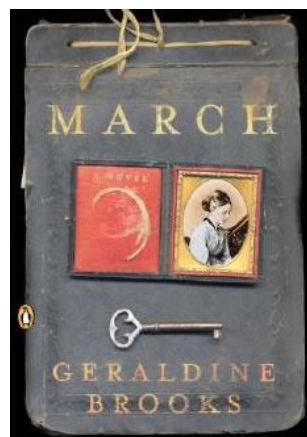
What would happen if all of Westford read the same book?

We'll find out this winter as **Westford READS!** commemorates the 150th anniversary of the Civil War by offering **free copies** of:

March by Geraldine Brooks (our fiction selection based upon the war experiences of chaplain Bronson Alcott, the "father" in Little Women).

Confederates in the Attic by Tony Horwitz is a rousing non-fiction journey into the Civil War battlefields with modern re-enactors.

Stop by the Library and pick up your free copy (until our donated copies run out) of either title.



Join us, January through April, through book discussions, movie matinees, music, historical lectures, a bus tour to Orchard House, Children's Book Clubs, a militia re-enactment and a Tea Party – we study the War Between the States and understand how the defining conflicts of 19th-century America have shaped our past and our shared future.

For a complete roster of the upcoming programs and descriptions of March and Confederates in the Attic visit the J. V. Fletcher Library's website at www.westfordlibrary.org and click on the links for "Westford READS!"

All **Westford READS! programs** and events are made possible by the Friends of the J. V. Fletcher Library, Inc.

Cameron Senior Center News

Upcoming Events

ASK OUR REALTOR - Local real estate agent Kathy Cunningham of Coldwell Banker will be at Cameron on Monday, February 11th at 10:00 AM. Please sign up by calling 978-692-5523.

CAMERON CLOSET SALE! February 1st - 15th \$1 an item. February 18th - 28th \$1 a bag. Shopping hours are Monday - Friday, 9 AM - 3 PM. Closed March 1st to convert over to spring summer items.

ASK THE OFFICER - Westford Police Department Family Services Detective, Nirisa Nicoletti, will be available for consultation at Cameron on the 2nd Thursday of each month from 11AM to 12 Noon – she will be here on January 10th and February 14th. If you would like to schedule an appointment, you may reserve time with Nirisa, or walk-ins will also be welcome as time permits. Matters discussed will be kept confidential. Please call 978-692-5523 for an appointment.

ART CLASS with Stella - Bring your medium/project and Stella, a lifelong artist with over 60 years of teaching, will help take you to the next level. Classes are on Wednesday mornings from 9:15 until 11:15 AM. The cost is \$5.00 per class. Drop-ins welcome!

RESTAURANT REVIEW. Be sure to mark your calendars for our next outings on Wednesdays, January 30th at 11:30 AM at the Nashoba Ski Outlook Restaurant, Powers Rd and February 27th at 11:30 AM at the Westford 99 on Littleton Road. Please pre-register at 978-692-5523, so we can call the restaurant with a head count for adequate seating. When you arrive you can check in under “Westford Senior Center”. Bon Appétit.

ASK THE LAWYER - Free legal service provided by the office of Attorney Leslie Madge is available to all Westford seniors age 60 and over by appointment only on Monday, January 14th from 9:30 AM - Noon. Please call 978-692-5523 to reserve a time.

FOOD PANTRY HOURS - Located at 20 Pleasant Street
Mondays: January 28th and February 4th & 25th from 1:00 - 3:30 PM.
Wednesdays: February 6th & 20th from 8:30 - 11:30 AM.
Thursdays February 7th & 21st from 8:30 - 11:30 AM & 6 - 8 PM.
Fridays: February 1st & 15th from 8:30 - 11:30 AM.



Westford Senior Center

PODIATRY CLINIC - Our podiatrist, Dr. Aileen Gregorian will be at the Senior Center on Friday, February 15th at 9:30 AM. The cost of the clinic is \$25. Appointments are necessary; please call 978-692-5523.

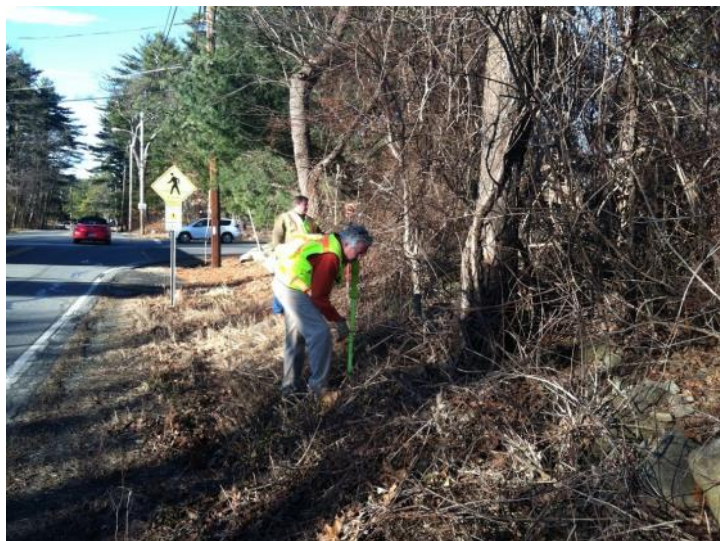
BINGO - Mondays, 1–3 PM & Thursday's, 7–9 PM, doors open ½ hour early. If you need a ride, call the transportation line at 978-399-2322 in advance.

To see the entire COA newsletter please visit our web-site at www.westfordma.gov/coa, and click on [COA Newsletters](#).

Engineering Department News



The Engineering Department is currently working to prepare preliminary base plans for two proposed sidewalks in support of the Pedestrian Safety Committee's effort to create safe pedestrian routes in school neighborhoods. If approved, one sidewalk would connect surrounding neighborhoods with the Nabnasset School and another would link an existing sidewalk along Concord Road to the Colonel John Robinson School.



Fire Department News



As the cold weather has hit, many people are using fireplaces and woodstoves to keep warm.

Prevent Fires from Woodstove & Fireplace Ashes

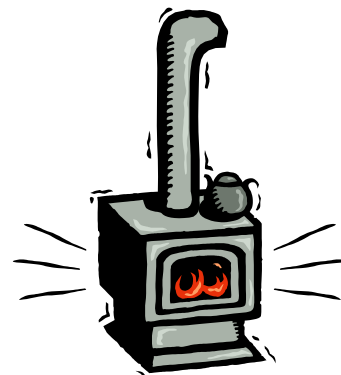
To prevent fires, ashes cleaned out of woodstoves and fire places should be shoveled into a metal bucket with a tight-fitting metal lid and immediately placed outside, well away from the building. There have been many recent fires from ashes stored underneath a deck or porch or inside the garage or from ashes stored in cardboard boxes, paper bags and plastic trashcans. A single live ember can continue to smolder undetected for quite some time.



It is important to use all heating sources safely. Here is some information on preventing fires from chimneys, wood, coal and pellet stoves.

Tips for Safe Use of Wood, Coal and Pellet Stoves

Before you purchase a heating stove, make sure that it has approval from Underwriters Laboratories Inc. or another recognized independent testing lab.



Installation

- A building permit needs to be obtained prior to installation of fireplaces, fireplace inserts, wood, coal or pellet burning stoves and must be inspected by the local building inspector prior to their initial use as required by the Massachusetts State Building Code.
- Allow at least 36 inches of clearance around the appliance to prevent combustibles from coming into contact with heat sources.
- Solid fuel heating appliances cannot share a common flue with chimney flues utilized by other solid, fossil, or gas fired appliances.
- A qualified mason should inspect the chimney and flue before the stove is used. Cracks in the flue or mortar joints can allow flames and heated gases to extend into the structure.

(continued on next page)

Fire Department News (continued)



Proper Use of Wood, Coal and Pellet Stoves

- Most chimney fires occur because of a build-up of creosote, a tarry by-product of burning wood. Have your chimney flue cleaned before each heating season. Burn only dry, well seasoned, hardwood to reduce creosote accumulation.
- Don't use flammable liquids to start a fire.
- Never leave children unattended near the stove.
- Check that the damper is open before lighting the fire. A closed damper will result in an accumulation of smoke and carbon monoxide in the home. Do not close the damper until the fire is out and the embers are cold.
- Use a fireplace screen to prevent flying sparks and embers from falling out on to the floor.

Install Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Install smoke alarms to warn of a fire, but also have carbon monoxide (CO) alarms in the home to warn about deadly fumes from a faulty furnace, fireplace and oven flue or other venting problem. Problems with heating systems are the #1 source of carbon monoxide in homes. Both types of alarms are required by law in Massachusetts.



Water Department

Water Meters

Water meters need to be replaced every 15 years according to accepted performance standards. When you receive a letter from the Water Department indicating the need to replace your meter, please contact the Water Department as soon as possible to schedule an appointment. Replacement of the meter takes about 30 minutes and is performed at no charge to you. With over 500 meters to change per year your cooperation is crucial for us to get this done!



Fire Hydrants

We need your help in keeping the fire hydrants free from snow! With over 1,000 hydrants in town it takes us considerable time to get to them all after each major snow storm. The more help we get from folks the quicker we can get them cleared and easily accessible in the event of an emergency. The last thing anyone wants is to have to search for a buried hydrant during an emergency.

Also—please remember that: In accordance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 148 Section 27B it is unlawful to pile, push, or plow snow or ice on or against any fire hydrant in any public or private way. Please make sure not to shovel, plow, or blow snow onto the hydrants when clearing your property!



Consumer Confidence Report

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) requires that community water systems, like the Water Department, deliver an annual water quality report - known as the Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) - to all of its customers. Recently, the EPA has determined that electronic delivery of this report – with certain exceptions and provisions - is an acceptable alternative to mailing a hardcopy. The Water Department is seriously considering this electronic option as we feel it offers a cost-saving and efficient means of providing our customers with the necessary information – in the electronic format that is becoming more widely used.

Currently, the Water Department mails a hardcopy of the annual CCR to all of our customers, and maintains an electronic copy on our webpage. Electronic delivery would be accomplished by providing a direct URL to the CCR at our webpage on water bills. Hardcopies of the CCR would still be available to those who want them.